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"The perfection of the senses as ministers to thought must be one of the first cares of the teacher."

SRI AUROBINDO

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The Advent

So the Light grows always.
As for the shadow it is only a shadow and will disappear in the growing Light.

SRI AUROBINDO

The ADVENT

AUGUST, 1957

CONTENTS

		Page
EDITORIAL: THE STORY OF LOVE	—*Nolini Kanta Gupta*	... 5
LETTERS OF SRI AUROBINDO	—*Sri Aurobindo*	... 11
THE TEACHING OF SRI AUROBINDO	—*M. P. Pandit*	... 18
SRI AUROBINDO AND THE THEORY OF EMERGENT EVOLUTION	—*K. C. Pati*	... 24
THE TEACHINGS OF THE MOTHER	—*Rishabhchand*	... 33
SRI AUROBINDO AND THE PROBLEM OF WORLD PEACE	—*Sreekrishna Prasad*	... 43
THE LIFE DIVINE (An Outline)	—*N. Pearson*	... 50
REVIEW	—*K. C. Varadachari*	... 60

Travailler pour le Divin
c'est très bien et c'est une joie
Mais travailler avec le Divin
c'est une félicité infiniment
plus profonde et plus douce

12-7-57

To work for the Divine is very good, it is a delight.
But to work with the Divine is a felicity infinitely deeper and sweeter still.

The Mother

Vol. XIV. No. 3 August, 1957

THE ADVENT

The Divine gives itself to those who give themselves without reserve and in all their parts to the Divine. For them the calm, the light, the power, the bliss, the freedom, the wideness, the heights of knowledge, the seas of Ananda. - - - - *Sri Aurobindo.*

EDITORIAL

THE STORY OF LOVE*

LOVE, in its essence, is the joy of identity. It finds its final expression in the felicity of union. Between the two there are all the phases that make up the universal manifestation.

Love comes from the very origin of the universe. Love in its essence, I say, that is, before the manifestation, is the delight of identity. Something there was which became conscious of the identity. And that is precisely Love. Afterwards comes the manifestation of Love. In its highest form, when it comes back to its origin across all its history of manifestation, it becomes the felicity of union. The sense of union comes as a consequence of the sense of separation. The passage through the whole manifested universe gives the sense of separation from the origin and the return to the origin is the felicity of reunion—union of two things which were separated and are united again. That is Love in its great circuit of manifestation.

When it climbs back to its origin, it returns to the starting-point with something more than what it had before it started. It is the experience

* Based on talks of the Mother

of the universe and universality. Fundamentally that is the reason for the existence of creation. Consciousness would not be what it is had it not been expressed in a creation. There is an enrichment of consciousness through the experience gathered in an objective universe, a richness of content and a plenitude it would not have if there were not a manifested universe.

The return movement of creation is not a thing that happens in time. It is difficult to conceive, because for us things are successive. But if one could conceive a movement as a whole embracing everything which would be at the same time the beginning and the end, and contain all, it would then be not a return in time, but a return in consciousness.

If there were not the circuit, there would never be the Ananda of union, there would be only the Ananda of identity. And it is precisely in order that this Ananda of identity may find its culmination and crowning in the Ananda of union that the whole circuit has been done.

* *

The very moment when the individual consciousness moved away from its divine origin and remained no longer identified with the movement of the divine consciousness, the sense of separation was created. The individual consciousness did not separate wilfully, but it remained no longer identified. Not being identified, the Divine Consciousness followed a certain movement and the individual consciousness followed another, and naturally they moved away from each other more and more. Let us say, as an image, that the Divine Consciousness advances at a certain speed and the individual consciousness, not having remained united with it, could not follow it and therefore fell back more and more, far behind. The divine moves forward, the individual stops; when the individual moves, the divine flies. When the individual takes one step, the divine leaps. That increases the gap of separation more and more. It is this original separation that has produced others in its train and these separations all together have created the universal misery, at least the earthly misery as we know it.

It all began by a separation in the consciousness and it ended by a separation in respect of the worlds and their elements, by a division that we witness down to the material nature. The separation in consciousness has produced the separation of forms and the separation of forms has induced pain and suffering. Now therefore there are these countless objects that lie about divided and separated from one another. Since, however, the

universe had to be a progressive thing, the bliss of identity, the full consciousness of this identity had necessarily to be veiled, otherwise nothing would have moved.

Evidently, if the sense of unity were reestablished, the miseries would disappear. But if you realised the perfect identity and the whole universe in its totality realised this absolute unity in which there is no possibility of any distinction, then there would be no universe at all, it would be the return to Pralaya. The solution then is to find Ananda in the play of mutual exchange and union.

What has been projected into space and time must be brought back to itself, without thereby annulling the world so created. That is why Love burst forth as the irresistible power of Union. It soared over darkness and unconsciousness, it scattered itself, pulverised itself into the bosom of unfathomable night. It is from then that began the awakening and the ascension, the slow formation in and out of Matter and a progress without end.

II

There is a state of consciousness in which one experiences the Divine Love everywhere. One does not feel then a great difference between one creature and another except in their physical appearance. Even in unconsciousness and immobility, the apparently complete inertia—of the stone, for example—can be found a dazzling light, the light of the divine Presence. There is much more aspiration than one thinks in objects that are usually called inanimate. In the stone precisely there is a spontaneous sense of what is there high above and although it cannot express it, it feels the thing and that affects it although in different ways. In the stone, in things and objects, there is a strange receptivity that comes from this Presence.

You can take what you call a precious stone and concentrate a force or forces in it. It keeps them. These forces radiate afterwards very slowly, but increasingly, progressively. And if you know how to do it, you can accumulate a quantity of force to last almost indefinitely so to say. There are stones that serve as intermediaries of union, stones that serve as accumulators of energy and stones that may serve as foretellers of circumstances, they may carry messages. Therefore, as they can serve as accumulators, it means that they carry in themselves the source of the Force itself, otherwise they would not be receptive.

It is a force of this kind that is the origin of the phenomenon of crystallisation. Crystals gather together in matter, it is already a movement of love. Stones that crystallise, rock crystals, for example, form wonderful designs, so magnificent in their absolute harmony; that comes because of only one thing—the Force of Love.

You do not see the thing, because you have not the inner sensibility. But once you have the direct perception of the forces of love behind things you see that it is everywhere the same. And you can even come to understand what man-made manufactured things tell you.

The movement is quite perceptible in the vegetable kingdom, in the tree and the plant. These trees that rise up and up always, the small ones trying to catch up the big ones, the big ones endeavouring to mount still further ! The plants always seek to find out a direction from where they can receive as much light as possible. It is the need to grow in order to get more light, more air, more space.

When you see a rose opening out to the sun, it is as it were for the need of giving away its beauty. For us it is unintelligible, for flowers do not think out what they do. A human being always associates with what he does the capacity to see what he does, to think what he does. But flowers are not so to say conscious at all, theirs is a spontaneous movement. It is a mighty Force that is at work through all this, the great universal Consciousness, the great force of universal Love that makes all things flower in beauty.

It is said the tiger's need to devour is one of the first expressions of love in the world. What is likely to prove that this is not quite false is that when a tiger or a serpent catches its victim, the victim usually gives himself up in a kind of delight of being eaten. A testimony comes in the experience of a man in the following true story. He happened to be in the midst of bushes with his comrades. He was a little behind away from others and a tiger caught him. The others returned when they noticed that he had disappeared. They found and followed the traces and arrived just in time to save him from the jaws of the tiger. When he had recovered a little, he was told what a terrible experience he must have had! He replied that it was nothing of the kind: "Just imagine, I don't know what happened to me, but as soon as the tiger seized me and began to drag me along the ground, I felt an intense love for him and a great desire that he should eat me". This is I say, a true story.

As a matter of fact, long before the tiger came on the scene, there must

have been early creatures dwelling at the bottom of the sea that had only one function, the stomach. They existed only as stomachs and their only activity was to swallow. One may say that these are the first expressions of love seeping through matter. For, before that there was nothing, except perfect inconscience, complete immobility, nothing was moving. It is with love that movement began, consciousness awakened, transformation started. Love is the power of the world.

The need to swallow is a primitive way of uniting with things, but it is a very direct way, you swallow and you absorb the thing. The tiger takes a great joy in the thing; there is a joy and that is already a higher form of love.

If you want to know what love is, you must love the Divine. It is a very well-known fact that in the end you become similar to the thing you love. If you love the Divine, by the force of this love, little by little, you will become more and more like the Divine. And then one can identify oneself with the divine Love and know what it is, you cannot know it in any other way.

Necessarily, the love between two human beings is always made of ignorance, misunderstanding, weakness and a terrible sense of isolation. It would be as if you wanted to gain entrance into the presence of a unique Splendour and the first thing you do is to put a screen between yourself and this Splendour and you are very astonished at not having but a vague impression of it! The first thing then to do is to do away with the screen, pass through and stand in the presence of the Splendour. Then you know what it is. But if you go on piling veil after veil between you and That, you will never see it. You may have just a vague impression, "there is something" and that is all.

One of the highest expressions of love in human beings is the giving of oneself entirely to the person loved. That is to say, to sacrifice oneself for the motherland, give one's life in defending another person etc. This may not be the very highest form, but it is already something. From there you have to climb very high up to arrive at the true expression which is on the summit of the ascent. The ultimate expression of love is in the felicity of union.

That brings us to the symbol of Krishna and Radha. Krishna is he of whom Sri Aurobindo speaks as the divine flute-player, that is to say, the immanent and universal Divine who is the supreme power of attraction. Radha is the name given to the soul, the psychic personality responding to the call of the flute-player.

Radha consciousness is essentially the way in which the individual answers to the divine call. Sri Aurobindo describes it as the capacity to find Ananda in all things through identification with the one divine Presence and through total self-giving to this Presence. That has the power of changing everything into perpetual ecstasy. Instead of seeing things in their apparent discord, you see the Presence alone, the Will and the Grace in all things. And every event, every element, every circumstance, every form changes into a way, a detail through which you can approach more intimately and more profoundly the Divine. The discordances disappear, the uglinesses vanish, there remains only the splendour of the divine presence in the Love that radiates in all things.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

This is how God in His love teaches the child soul and the weakling, taking them step by step and withholding the vision of His ultimate and yet unattainable mountain-tops. And have we not all some weakness? Are we not all in His sight but as little children?

SRI AUROBINDO

LETTERS OF SRI AUROBINDO

DREAMS—VISIONS—SYMBOLS

(*I was removing mud from the well. Family members on the wall asked me to come out as a bad smell was coming out of the well. But I continued; the earth tore into two parts and water came out and a creature like a tortoise jumped up and fell on my back. It was white. I shouted: 'Remove it, otherwise it will bite me'. But nobody did so; they said 'See, how your body is becoming golden.' I told them: 'Whomsoever it touches it turns into gold.' So saying I took it in my handkerchief and it was still living.*)

The well is evidently the subconscient which you were cleaning, the family members are the old (perhaps the hereditary) constituents of the physical nature. The cleaning of the mud brings up the tortoise which is the secret divine element supporting the subconscient physical (as in the Indian symbol of the earth supported by the Tortoise). Its touch turns the physical to gold, meaning that by its release the true physical is brought into action instead of the ordinary ignorant body consciousness. Putting in the handkerchief perhaps means taking possession or control of this white enlightened Power instead of being controlled by the dark subconscient as before.

5-6-1934

* *

(*A flying bird on my head; perhaps it is a crow or a kite or an eagle; I do not recognise it.*)

It is not possible to fix the significance without knowing which bird

it was. The crow signifies practical cleverness, the eagle Intelligence. The kite is Krishna's *vāhana*.

13-3-1932

* *

(*Two white birds coming out of darkness and flying towards light.*)

Simply, souls going from darkness to light.

21-4-1934

* *

(*An earthen-pot with flame inside is ascending in the region of light. Does it signify anything?*)

Possibly, the aspiration in the physical consciousness.

13-1-1934

* *

(*A monkey humbly bowing to Mother, hands joined together.*)

It seems to indicate the submission of the physical mind.

13.1.1934

* *

(*A white elephant with golden tusks; beside it a golden tree. It is full of light around the elephant.*)

It must be a symbol of spiritual strength in the illumined vital (golden tree), strength armed with the truth (golden tusks).

13-1-1934

* *

(*Fish swimming in air.*)

The fish is the vital impulse mobile and inconstant—the air is the mind. Perhaps it is the vital mind that is indicated—or else the vital impulse getting into the mind and moving there.

24-9-1934

* *

(*An inverted golden triangle with a gold dot in the centre, shining in light.*)

The dot I suppose is the psychic being and the triangle—Mind, life, body—golden, that is to say transformed by the light of the Truth.

28-2-1934 *

*

Blue is the symbol of the spiritual consciousness.

* *

Apsaras generally indicate sexual desire.

* *

(*Parrot with a golden neck instead of black, and golden beak instead of red. The mind asked if there could be such a parrot.*)

Not in the physical world.

Perhaps the parrot means the mechanical mind which always repeats the same thoughts. The gold beak and neck would imply some touch of higher knowledge repeating itself in the mind instead of the mechanical ignorance.

3-7-1934

* *

(*A big T in red.*)

Simply the lower part of the cross. The red signifies the physical—it is the cosmic and individual in the physical nature, but the transcendent consciousness is not there.

3-4-1934

* *

(*A tall white horse, very unruly. Nobody could tame him. At last one person caught him and put a chain on his mouth and led to the stable.*)

Some untamed power of the vital got into control after much difficulty.

* *

(*Some one drinking 'Bhang'.*)

It could only mean some inner intoxication.

* *

(*I had a dream in which I found myself having the same reactions to men and things as I used to have years ago before I came here for Sadhana. Does that show that I am really unchanged?*)

A dream of this kind always indicates what is in the subconscient vital. It may be something still in the nature or else something that is only an impression or...*survival* from the past.

* *

(*I saw an oblong figure in yellow colour; inside was another oblong figure in black; within the black there was an E whose lines were red but between the lines it was black.*)

It seems to be a figure representing the external consciousness of man

in the ignorance. E probably means "earth" or "external". Black and red are tamas and rajas—yellow mental sattwa.

3-2-1934

* *

The movement of ascension cannot finish so long as the movement of descent is not ready to finish.

1-2-1934

* *

(*A branch with leaves.*)

Images of leaves and plants usually indicate vital strength or energy.

21-3-1934

* *

(*Bright burning sun with yellowish cool light around it.*)

The Sun is the Truth in its full blaze—the yellowish cool light must be its modification in the mind.

* *

(*A circle of burning light. Light shooting upwards from the circle in spraylike jets.*)

It must be a luminous fire of aspiration going up from the soul.

* *

('*Ganapati*' —*God with elephant trunk.*)

Bringer of Knowledge and remover of obstacles.

5-4-1934

* *

(*Three circles, one within the other; a Shankha (conch) in the innermost circle; the Shankha contains a circle within it.*)

It is the Adhar with the Call in the centre—the circle in the conch is probably the psychic.

22-3-1934

* *

(*New moon upon the brow of the left eye.*)

The moon signifies the light of spirituality or of the spiritual consciousness.

29-3-1934

* *

(*A circle within a square. A small circle at the centre of the circle; four rays shoot out from this small circle and light up the bigger circle and the square. The ends of the 4 rays are joined by four lines which in turn make up another square—but within the circle.*)

The square containing the circle is the perfect supramental creation. The circle in the centre is the soul. The two rays make the cross which is the sign of the transcendent, cosmic and individual meeting together and the square is again the supramental force or being, the meeting of the three.

* *

(*The figure 67.*)

6 is again creation and 7 perfection.

19-3-1934

* *

(*A serpent ascending straight.*)

The serpent is the symbol of energy, it may be bad or hostile energy —but it may also be a good, even a divine energy.

* *

(*Three shining circles, each within the other; the small centre circle is blue, the middle one shining white and the outer big circle golden.*)

A circle of my light, a circle of the Mother's, a circle of the light of the Divine Truth.

6-4-1934

SRI AUROBINDO

THE TEACHING OF SRI AUROBINDO (2)

YOGA

MAN is normally aware of only a little part of himself. The mind with which he thinks and acts, the life-energy by which he is moved and sustained and the physical body in which both the mind and life are housed are all that he knows. But that is only his external being, a small part. He has a larger, inner being of which the outer is really a projection.

Behind the ordinary mind which is limited in its means of knowledge and modes of operation there is an inner mind with greater faculties and a vaster reach. Behind the life-entity arrested by the bounds in which it is involved there is an inner life-being with a freer and larger dynamism. And corresponding to the physical frame so obviously circumscribed there is also a subtle-physical body with a wider range. These three, the inner mental, inner life or vital, the inner physical—the *manomaya puruṣa*, *prāṇamaya puruṣa*, and the *annamaya puruṣa* of the Upanishad—together constitute the inner being of man. Deeper than these, supporting them in their life-evolution, is still another being, the soul, the *antarātman*, who is a living spark of the Divine. This inmost being is the divine entity in man around which the rest of his being is centred for the significance of its life journey. Appropriately called, by Sri Aurobindo, the psychic being, the *caitya puruṣa* (being of pure consciousness), it is stationed in the inner recesses of the heart, *hṛdaye guhāyām*—not the physical heart but behind the cardiac centre.

The powers and potentialities of this inner being[1] are infinitely greater and wider than those of the outer surface being and it is in proportion as they are brought out and made active in the front that man is more

[1] The entire expanse of this inner being alive with a consciousness of its own is called the subliminal; but there are ranges where this consciousness is not active. Those that are below the levels of the active consciousness form what can be called the sub-conscient and those that exceed them the super-conscient.

effective or less. It is from here that well out all true movements of Knowledge, Power, Beauty and Joy; but the limitations of the outer instrumental being diminish, dilute, even distort, their expression. It is possible, Sri Aurobindo teaches, to open up these inner ranges of the being and manifest their potentialities for the increase and perfection of man by certain psychological practices of Yoga.

II

Lost on the superficies of his being man does not know himself. To know, one has to become conscious. He should cease from looking only outward and begin to turn his gaze inward. He must gather up all the threads of his consciousness spread far and near, draw them closer and converge it within himself: concentrate. This concentration is best focussed in the region of the heart. The outgoing energies withdraw from their customary preoccupation and the consciousness flows and feels inwards to get to its true source—the soul in the cavern of the heart, the psychic Purusha on whose support, veiled or apparent, the triple being of man depends for its existence. With persistent effort of will and aspiration for its revelation, it is possible for man to arrive at this centre of the Divine's manifestation within himself and with a constant opening and willed surrender of the rest of his being to its influence and control, to so shape his life and movements as to recast them in the mould of this inner Daemon. The psychic being is truly a delegate of the Divine in the individual evolution and when fully realised it gains him an identity with the Divine as the essential Self of his manifestation. To reach this inmost centre of oneself, to find and secure one's foundation on this spiritual basis and discipline all the parts of the being so as to become free instruments for the spontaneous manifestation of this Divine Individual and its inalienable Powers of Purity, Beauty, Harmony and Joy is the meaning of this first decisive step of Sri Aurobindo's Yoga—the realisation of the Inner Divine.

An identity with the Divine within is gained. But that is not enough. One has also to reach identity with the Divine without. For the Divine which manifests in the individual is manifest in the Universe also. Only, there it is an extended manifestation[1]. The truth of my being is not com-

[1] एकं वा इदं विबभूव सर्वम् (Rv. VIII. 58.2).
The one hath become All this.

plete without the truth of my neighbour's. A separative wall of ignorance shuts off my world from the world of another. The barrier is to be broken and the identity of the Divine in me with the Divine as the All must be realised.

One has to learn to enlarge oneself, to extend the range of one's consciousness to embrace more and more of the universe. One can begin at any level of his being : with a widening of the horizons of the mind or with an outflow of sympathy, love and harmony from the awakened psychic centre in the heart. This movement of self-expansion gains depth and power as the consciousness liberating itself from the limiting hold of external nature, grows into the larger consciousness active in the subliminal being, extends itself wider and wider as is natural to the subliminal, and ultimately culminates in the embrace of the individual with the Universal Consciousness. It is then that one realises his true unity with his fellow-beings at the common Source. The Divine that I am and the Divine that is the universe are found to be One ; indeed, I am All, *aham eva idam sarvam*[2]. This is the second step : the realisation of the Cosmic Divine.

The Divine in the individual and the Divine in the universe are realised to be the same because they are both manifestations of the One Divine which transcends both the individual and the universe.[3] It is this Supreme Divine that individualises itself as the divine self of the individual upholding his existence ; it is the same transcendent Divine which likewise formulates itself as the divine Self of the universe basing the All-existence. Hence both the self of the individual and the Self of the universal are identical in their origin. And Sri Aurobindo's yoga, seeking to embrace the whole of the Divine in its manifestation, naturally includes in its aim a union with the transcendent Divine in all its infinitude of Peace, Joy, Knowledge and Power.

The way is to rise in one's consciousness above the boundaries of the present formula of man's existence, body, life and mind. One has to open higher ranges that are lying closed in the being. Above the thinking mind there are a number of gradations of consciousness, each with its

[2] *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* : 7.25.1

[3] एको देवः सर्वभूतेषु गूढः सर्वव्यापी सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा . . . सर्वभूताधिवासः . . . केवलो निर्गुणश्च (*Svet. Up.* VI.11)

One Godhead, occult in all beings, the inner Self of all beings, the all-pervading, Absolute without qualities.

characteristic powers. These planes of existence are to be made active and the consciousness trained to rise to these higher levels and naturalise the workings of their Powers in itself—the Powers of Knowledge, Will and Bliss which are increasingly manifest on these higher altitudes nearer to the 'own home', *svam damam*, of the manifesting Spirit. At the same time, the existing active parts of the being are to be lifted up and treated to the light of the incoming Spiritual Power.

This double process of ascent of our consciousness into the higher heights of the Spirit and the descent of the Higher Consciousness with its native Powers to settle in the being is to be brought about by a discipline of concentration, will and aspiration. One can concentrate in the head to this end or meditate in an utter receptivity of the whole being, or one can go into the temple of the heart and from there invoke the Higher Power to manifest itself. Whatever the means, the aim is to open more and more to the spiritual Force of the Divine in manifestation so that one grows and imbibes more and more of the nature of the Godhead. Each higher revelation of the Divine Consciousness as it unveils itself stamps its own character on the being which offers itself to its clasp. This is the mode of progression : ascent, descent, integration which leads to the ultimate fulfilment of the human into the divine. But this last consummation of the complete change of the human nature into a divine nature, the conversion of man into a God-man, can be effected by nothing less than the Direct Power of the Divine, the highest formulation of the Supreme Consciousness, the Dynamism of Knowledge-Will at the head of all manifestation, termed the Supermind by Sri Aurobindo. To attain to this supramental Consciousness through a developing spiritualisation of the being is the third and culminating realisation of this Yoga.

It is not that these three realisations always come successively and in this order. They need not. Generally that which is most natural to the bent of the soul comes first and the others follow. They may—and often do—grow simultaneously, interact and promote each other; it may appear that the movement of one progression comes to a standstill and another takes its place; but in the end, they all converge into a total Realisation.

III

No serious sadhana is undertaken without the aid of a guide, and specially in a yoga of this type which covers many untrodden tracks in its

comprehensive scope, it is imperative that there must be a Teacher who can guide and lead. The Teacher, Guru, is one who has realised and holds in himself the Dynamis of the Truth that is sought and is capable of communicating his realisation to another. He initiates, he pours the Power of his realisation in the disciple, in silence or by word, and it is this Shakti that works out the sadhana with the instrumentality of his faculties. This is the Divine Shakti—for the Power of the Guru is in fact the Shakti, the Consciousness-Force of the Truth-Being that is manifest in him—that leads and sustains the seeker through whatever ups and downs in the difficult endeavour.

Doubtless the individual has his own contribution to make. He must have a soaring *aspiration* for the Truth of this Path. Not only his central part but the whole being must turn to it and be lit with this flame of aspiration. The fire must burn.

There has to be a constant *rejection* of all that tends to weaken the strength of this aspiration, to dilute the will that is dedicated to the Ideal. Things are to be rejected or accepted not on any moral or religious grounds but only on one criterion : whatever helps the growth of the inner life is to be accepted and whatever retards to be rejected. But one is not to preoccupy himself too much with this process of negation and elimination. It is the positive gains of Purity, Peace, Knowledge that are to be strived for and as they settle in the being of the seeker in response to his aspiration and call, they displace their opposites.

Side by side, the being has to learn to *surrender* itself to the Divine Shakti, the Higher Consciousness that is set active in oneself, in order to be effectively worked upon and moulded according to the needs of the sadhana. The recalcitrant parts are to be disciplined to follow the parts that have received the higher light; the mind and the heart are to be tuned to the Voice of the Guide whether within oneself or in the person of the Guru. The role of surrender in this Yoga is not to negate personal effort and will but to raise them to their highest potency by merging them in the self-fulfilling Will and Power of the Divine.

The effort is not inner alone; the outer being also has its share to contribute. The Yoga aims at an upliftment and transforming change of the whole man—not merely the liberation of his soul—and hence all parts of his being have to be possessed, purified and enabled to participate in the Yoga. They are all to accord with the growing realisation within. The thinking mind is to be cultivated and helped to enlarge and illumine itself

in the Way of Knowledge; the emotive parts, especially the heart is to be tended into a living centre for a many-sided outflowering of emotions in the Way of Love for the supreme Lover; the dynamic or the life-being is to be yoked to the Will of the Divine and dedicated to the Way of Works to the complete exclusion of personal aim and desire; the very body is to be disciplined, purified and developed into a vibrant tabernacle of God.

This then is the labour that the seeker of the Integral Yoga has to put forth with *Faith* in the Divine Grace which has chosen him for the high destiny. The labour is indeed twofold : the personal effort and the working of the Grace. In the beginning—and that is for a considerable time—the effort has to be mainly of the individual and the Grace works through this instrumentation; it is only as he learns to surrender and place himself in the hands of the Divine that the personal striving is gradually replaced by the larger self-fulfilling action of the Shakti till the stage arrives when the sadhana is directly taken up by the Divine Power at work. And it is indispensable that this should take place. For the central object of this Yoga is not self-extinction, Nirvana, which one can achieve with a determined effort of will and concentration; nor is it a state of self-realisation which it is possible to attain by tapasya and a faith in the guiding grace; the aim here is a lifting up of the entire being of man to the heights of the Spirit undivided and indivisible and a remaking of it, a transformation of its nature in terms of this integral Divine Truth and this can be effected by no human effort, however intensive or massive. It can be consummated only by the original Power of Knowledge-Will, the Consciousness-Force that reigns in the Truth of the Gnosis, the Supreme Shakti that is the Divine Mother.

(to be continued)

M. P. PANDIT

SRI AUROBINDO AND THE THEORY OF EMERGENT EVOLUTION

TWO of the greatest exponents of the theory of emergent evolution in the West are C. Lloyd Morgan and Dr S. Alexander. Both Morgan and Alexander developed their ideas in close philosophical sympathy and there was a good deal of mutual influence but the latter has built up a comprehensive system of metaphysics on the doctrine of emergent evolution.

Morgan was a scientist by temperament. His first-hand contact with a number of natural sciences like geology, biology, comparative psychology generated in him the belief and conviction about the truth of emergence in different orders and sub-orders of evolution. In his introduction "Comparative Psychology" Morgan speaks of a phenomenon called "selective synthesis". By "selective synthesis" Morgan implies that everywhere, in the sphere of physical, vital and mental evolution there is an apparent breach of continuity, which is not a gap, but a definite departure. Morgan represents his scheme of evolution pictorially with the help of a pyramid. According to him the bottom of the pyramid consists of spatio-temporally interrelated events which are nothing but matter-systems. At a higher level physical events are interrelated intrinsically in such an effective manner as to cause the emergence of life. So the middle of the pyramid consists of life-matter system. At a still higher level consciousness emerges and we have then a matter-life-mind system. Thus mind, the highest emergent, forms the top of the pyramid. So far Morgan is a strict naturalist and his insight is confined to observed phenomena. But after a certain stage he leaves his naturalistic bias and acknowledges the activity of a higher power whom he calls God as the ultimate "directive activity" behind the entire pyramid of emergence, though he neither justifies nor proves the intervention of such a power existing as a guiding force behind the evolutionary progression.

Alexander's theory of emergent evolution is contained in his famous *Gifford Lectures*, "Space, Time and Deity." Alexander discusses therein

very elaborately how he got at the hypothesis of Space-Time and how Space-Time as a system of motion constitutes the original matrix of the universe and how finite things and minds have emerged out of this stuff. According to Alexander the first emergent out of space-time by the activity of Time on Space is finite motion. By a further grouping of finite motions, there emerge collocations or 'constellations' of motion of some degree of complexity which he calls matter. Again, by a further differentiation and complexity of motion at a later stage there emerge the principle of life out of this dead matter and similarly mind out of life. Further, Alexander points out that life is identical and inseparable from the physical body which it permeates and so also mind or consciousness is identical with and inseparable from the vital organism which it knows and illumines. Alexander is very clear on the issue that mind is nothing but a neural process. But the most interesting aspect of Alexander's philosophy is the emergence or outflowering of the Deity out of Space-Time matrix. Alexander argues that if Space-Time could give birth to motion and motion to matter, matter to life and life to mind or consciousness, it is legitimate to expect that some quality higher than mind will emerge out of mind as well. Alexander in discussing the nature of the Deity says : "God is the whole universe engaged in a process towards the emergence of this new qauality and religion is the sentiment in us that we are drawn towards him and caught in the movement of the world to a higher level of existence." In other words, the clue to the Deity is found in religious consciousness. The term 'Deity' is used by Alexander at least in three different senses: (1) God or a god, (2) the quality of divinity, (3) the next higher being which emerges out of any level of existence. Each new evolute in comparison to the antecedent stage is a Deity. Alexander has discussed in detail the concept of the outflowering of the Deity in the evolutionary progression of the universe and at last the question is raised whether beings possessed of Deity actually exist. Alexander confidently says : "If time has now actually brought them forth, they do exist, if not their existence belongs to the future. Though such beings do not exist in our part of the universe, it is quite conceivable that they may exist in regions of existence beyond our ken." Further Alexander shows that God is present throughout the course of evolution as a nisus or goal and things and objects have this nisus to Deity. What is abiding and unchanging in the changing universe is not any particular emergent or even the original matrix but the constant tendency of the universe to something higher, what Alexander calls the nisus to Deity.

We have given a brief statement of the theories of emergent evolution by two of the greatest Western thinkers, Morgan and Alexander. Before we can evaluate them in the light of Sri Aurobindo's theory of spiritual evolution, it is necessary to examine the fundamental basis and conclusions of both these theories.

To begin with, the whole conception of evolution as it is understood not only by Morgan and Alexander but generally in the West has a scientific basis. Science itself, never undertakes the task of discovering the 'why' of things but only gives a statement of their 'how'. It shows how a certain thing evolves into another, how matter evolves into life, life into mind, but it does not explain why matter should develop into life, and life into mind. As Sri Aurobindo observes : "We speak of evolution of Life in Matter, the evolution of Mind in Matter; but evolution is a word which merely states the phenomenon without explaining it. For there seems to be no reason, why Life should evolve out of material elements or Mind out of living form unless we accept the Vedantic solution that Life is already involved in Matter and Mind in Life, because in essence Matter is a form of veiled Life and Life a form of veiled Consciousness."[1] In another context showing how Science merely deals with the outward physical processes and forms of things Sri Aurobindo writes : "The Western idea of evolution is the statement of a process of formation, not an explanation of our being. Limited to the physical and biological data of Nature, it does not attempt except in a summary or a superficial fashion to discover its own meaning, but is content to announce itself as the general law of a quite mysterious and inexplicable energy. Evolution becomes a problem in motion which is satisfied to work up with an automatic regularity its own puzzle, but not to work it out, because, since it is only a process, it has no understanding of itself, and, since it is a blind perpetual automatism of mechanical energy, it has neither an origin nor an issue. It began perhaps or is always beginning; it will stop perhaps in time or is always somewhere stopping and going back to its beginnings, but there is no why, only a great turmoil and fuss of a how to its beginning and its cessation; for there is in its acts no fountain of spiritual intention, but only the force of an unresting material necessity. The ancient idea of evolution was the fruit of a philosophical intuition, the modern is an effort of scientific observation."[2] These remarks of Sri Aurobindo apply rather directly to the basic assumptions of

[1] Sri Aurobindo *The Life Divine*, Ch. I.
[2] Sri Aurobindo, *The Problem of Rebirth*, Ch. VII. p. 69

both Morgan and Alexander. Matter, no doubt, is the lowest rung of the pyramid of evolution, but why should it develop into a more complex form of life and mind is neither explained by Morgan nor by Alexander. Alexander's assumption of Space-Time as the original matrix of the world is really born out of his materialistic bias and scientific temperament : To make Space-Time the primodial stuff of the universe is nothing but to worship the Absolute as purely physical. If the ultimate principle of the universe is bound and confined to the Spatio-temporal status and flux, how can it give rise to anything other than itself ? The emergence into existence of that which was wholly non-existent before is as difficult to understand as the doctrine of creation out of nothing. If Space-Time does not hold secretly or covertly the principle of life, how can it give rise to life ? Commenting on Alexander's system, Prof. S. K. Maitra remarks, "The whole scheme is materialistic. Really speaking there is no place for any God in it. Not to speak of God, there is no place for any mind or even for life in it. How can Space-Time evolve and bring out of it something which never has been nor can be ever in it and whose nature is totally different from its nature ? Evolution must have a method. You cannot evolve a camel out of a stone. How can Space-Time which is totally innocent of anything spiritual, develop a nisus towards a deity ?" Prof. Maitra thus proves that Alexander has foisted upon his theory of evolution a spiritual principle which has no relation with its materialistic basis.

Besides, let us take up Alexander's conception of 'Deity' as a nisus towards which the universe is moving and whose emergence as a new evolute is almost certain. There are various questions which arise in connection with the idea of 'Deity' : what is the nature of the 'Deity', whether it actually exists, what is its relation with man and the world? Alexander has tried to answer each of these questions in his own way but they are not satisfactory or acceptable to a rational mind, let alone a spiritual seeker. We have shown how according to Alexander the 'Deity' is a spatio-temporal product, though with greater complexity and subtlety. Alexander also says that the 'Deity' practically bears no relation with the human beings. "Spirit, personality, mind, all these human or mental characters belong to God, but not to his 'Deity'. They belong, as we must hold not to his Deity but to his body." Besides, Alexander points out that the Deity is not actual but an ideal and as such does not exist. He, further, continues, "We are now led to a qualification of the greatest importance. The picture which has been drawn of an infinite God is a concession to our figurative and mytho-

logical tendency and to the habit of the religious consciousness to embody our conception of God in an individual shape. But the infinite God is purely ideal or conceptual. The individual so sketched is not asserted to exist." This clearly shows God is not an actually existing Being possessing the quality of 'Deity' but another name for the universe with a nisus to Deity. We do not think that Alexander's 'deity' can ever satisfy human heart.

In spite of all these shortcomings, Alexander's idea of 'Deity' has behind it a certain poetic inspiration and some great vision. The difficulty which he has to face is quite natural to his scientific training and materialistic environment. Credit must go to him that he is one of the rare modern western thinkers who could, at least, point out that evolution will one day proceed beyond the mental level and there will come something as a race of gods or 'deities'. He has caught the vision of something like a 'new race' coming upon the earth and replacing the present mankind. His ideas may not have been put upon a sound basis and truly worked out, but he has received some glimpse of that which nature is in great travail to produce. Pointing out how the mental man is not the highest term of nature, and how nature is in travail to bring forth the spiritual man Sri Aurobindo writes, "The Spiritual man is her supreme supernormal effort of human creation, for, having evolved the mental creator, thinker, sage, prophet of an ideal, the self-controlled, the self-disciplined, harmonised mental being, She has tried to go higher and deeper within and call out into the front the soul, the innermind and heart, call down from above the forces of spiritual mind and higher mind and overmind and create under their light and by their influence the spiritual sage, seer prophet, God-lover Yogin, gnostic, sufi mystic."[1] We can be a little more sympathetic towards Alexander's idea of 'Deity' which, seems to be a very fruitful and brilliant vision of "future beings" to come. Nolini Kanta Gupta, pointing to the meaning of the 'Deity' writes, "By 'Deity' the emergent evolutionists mean the embodiment of the religious feeling—piety, charity, worship, love of God or of God's Creature. Indeed, Saints and prophets are visible deities, embodiment, of the Deity in making. These represent another element in the evolutionary process a new evolute".[2] He even goes so far as to liken the idea of Deity, coming at the apex of the evolutionary pyramid, to the idea of Avatarhood in Indian philosophy.

[1] Sri Aurobindo: *The Life Divine* Vol. II Chapter XVIII, p. 643. Amc. Ed.
Nolini Kanta Gupta, *The Yoga of Sri Aurobindo*, Part II, p. 70. 68.

Sri Aurobindo's Theory of Spiritual Evolution

Now let us turn to Sri Aurobindo's theory of spiritual evolution. Sri Aurobindo's theory of evolution forms one of the dominant aspects of his philosophy and it has so many facets that it is not easy enough to give a detailed analysis of each of these facets within the span of this short article. We shall however try to indicate the main trends of his theory, and its significance for the mankind.

According to Sri Aurobindo, evolution implies creation. Creation is nothing but the descent of the supreme spirit into this world of darkness and obscurity. The One, indivisible, imperishable, eternal, Absolute Being, or Sachchidananda, in his triple aspects of Existence, Consciousness-Force, and Bliss descends down and down till it reaches a point where it becomes its opposite. It is the plunge of the spirit into ignorance and inconscience. This is the 'Great Holocaust' which is spoken of in the Upanishads, the sacrifice of the 'Purusha' for the final redemption and deliverance of the world of ignorance and darkness. The Supreme thus gets involved at its lowest rung in the field of inconscience, the ocean of darkness as it is termed in the Vedas. The Supreme Power, however, comes down through several successive stages which are known as planes or 'Lokas' or Worlds. There are the sevenfold stages of the descent of the spirit as described in the Upanishads : Sat, Chit, Ananda, Supermind, Mind, Life, Matter. The first four planes Sat, Chit, Ananda, and Supermind constitute the upper hemisphere of creation and the latter three planes, Mind, Life, Matter constitute the lower hemisphere. To complete the list Sri Aurobindo adds one more principle "which comes into manifestation at the nodus of mind, life, and body, that which we call the 'soul'." Besides, Matter, Life, Mind and Soul are only subordinate powers of "the divine quarternary" Mind a subordinate power of the Supermind, Life a subordinate power of the energy aspect of Sachchidananda, Matter the form of substance of being which the existence of Sachchidananda assumes and soul or the psychic entity is "a projection and action of the divine principle of Bliss."

However, this descent of the spirit into the field of ignorance is otherwise known as involution. Involution is just the reverse process of evolution. Involution means the descent of the spirit into ignorance and inconscience while evolution means the ascent of the same spirit from its lowest basis towards the highest status. In other words evolution is the homeward journey of the spirit; a return unto itself. Matter, however,

is the first evolute of the evolutionary Power in its upward ascent. The character of Matter is just the opposite of spirit and as such is solid, opaque, dense and inert and divisible. But all the same it too, is Brahman—the supreme spirit holding within it the promise and potency of life. Matter is just a veiled form of life. Life remains, as it were, hidden, secret, dormant in a sleeping state in the very core of matter. At a certain stage 'life' descends from the plane of life and by its touch releases the latent power of life in matter. Thus we see the emergence of life in matter. But the push and "the Nisus" of evolution rushes forward and at a later stage, following a similar process, the crude and obscure mind covert in the instinctive and sensitive plane of life emerges and the mental being in man appears. Matter, life, mind are thus the three stages of the ascent of the spirit towards its own complete recovery and manifestation ; but each one of the gradation is a formulation of the same power, the same existence, consciousness-force and bliss. Mind, however, is not the last term of evolutionary Nature and what will appear in the next stage of evolution as a new 'emergent' is the Supermind, "the divine Gnosis which creates, governs and upholds the worlds : it is the secret Wisdom which upholds both our Knowledge and our Ignorance." To put the entire evolutionary development in the words of Sri Aurobindo, "Material energy would be then Life packed into the density of Matter and feeling out in it for its own intenser recognisable power which it finds within itself in the material concealment and liberates into action. Life itself would be an energy of a secret mind, a mind imprisoned in its own forms and quivering out in the nervous seekings of life for its intenser recognisable power of consciousness which it discovers within the vital and material suppression and liberates into sensibility. No doubt, practically, these powers work upon each other as different energies, but in essence they would be one energy and their interaction the power of the spirit working by its higher on its lower forces, depending on them at first, but yet turning in the scale of its ascent to overtop and master them. Mind too might only be an inferior scale and formulation derived from a much greater and supramental consciousness, and that consciousness too with its greater light and will a characteristic originating power of spiritual being, the power which secret in all things, in mind, in life, in matter, in the plant and the metal and the atom, assures constantly by its inevitable action the idea and harmony of the universe."[1] This emergence can only be a possibility when

[1] Sri Aurobindo: *The Problem of Rebirth*, page 78.

this superior power descends into the earthly nature and releases its native force concealed in the bed-rock of the evolutionary nature—the inconscience. It is with the descent of the supermind that the first beginnings of new humanity becomes possible. It is for the establishment of this New-Race by the descent of the 'Supramental Power' upon earth that Sri Aurobindo worked for his whole life.

Here we may point that the process of evolution as indicated by Sri Aurobindo, is a triple one which we may call a widening, a heightening and an integration. First of all, it means a widening of the field, providing greater room for the functioning of each principle as it emerges, secondly it means an ascent from grade to grade from the lower to the higher and thirdly it means taking up within itself, as soon as it reaches a higher grade, all previous lower grades and transforming them. Thus at each step of the ascent there is not merely an ascent to higher principle but a lifting up, sublimation and transformation of all the lower grades. Integration, in fact, always implies an ascent through descent. When life descended into Matter, it vitalised the latter, when mind descended into life, it mentalised both matter and life and when supermind would descend into the complex of matter-life-mind it would supramentalise it, or at least, transform it considerably, and evolve a new type of humanity. The establishment of this new humanity would be nothing but the beginning of the "Divine Life" upon earth. It is by descent of this supreme power that the course of evolution becomes completely changed. It is no more an evolution in ignorance, but an evolution in knowledge. It is an evolution which is self-planned and self-directed.

The whole of the earth-nature and mankind are always tending towards a higher station in the evolutionary scale where they would exceed themselves This self-exceeding or self-transcending is the very meaning of the ascent of the lower towards the higher. With man's conscious efforts, aspiration, and will it would be possible to proceed towards the Supermind beyond mind step by step. It is here that we come to the Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo. The Supermind or the Truth-consciousness, the Gnosis itself is the Rit-Chit the creative medium of the Sachchidananda. It is at once all-Knowledge, all-Will, all-Delight and its descent would bring about such a radical change in life and nature that man would be completely changed into a higher being. However, the whole humanity will not, at once be uplifted to this stage; only those who have made themselves ready to receive this Light by completely surrendering themselves to this Divine Power,

would be benefited by its intervention and descent into earth nature. The descent of the Supermind, its effect on humanity and what change it would bring about are questions which carry us so far beyond into the future that they cannot be adequately dealt with here.

It is, however, heartening to note here that the descent of the Supermind has already taken place as it is revealed to us from the message of the Mother on 24th April, 1956.

"The manifestation of the Supramental upon earth is no more a promise but a living fact, a reality.

It is at work here, and one day will come when the most blind, the most unconscious, even the most unwilling shall be obliged to recognise it."

K. C. PATI

THE TEACHINGS OF THE MOTHER

VI

GRACE

IN almost all theistic religions, Eastern and Western, the intervention and action of Grace has been acknowledged to be the supreme force of effectuation in spiritual life. But this intervention is held to be mysterious and unpredictable. Grace blows like the wind, "where it listeth". No virtues can claim it, and no sin, however black, need despair of it. It visits the broken hearts of the fallen and the deluded, and heals them with its balm of love; while it passes by the arrogant great, and lets the unrepentant stew in their own juice. It comes like gentle dew, a soft breath of zephyr on a sultry day, or a gleam of light in the midst of a forlorn darkness. It comes also sometimes like a cyclone or an earthquake, sweeping or upheaving the soul of man. Its frowns are as much a blessing as its irradiating smiles; and if it smites hard sometimes, it is only to rouse the slothful and the slumbering. But for the action of Grace, life would run in its normal grooves and the souls of creatures rust in their obscure inertia.

The Upanishads suggest the action of Grace when they say: "This understanding is not to be gained by reasoning nor by tapasya nor by much learning, but whom this Self chooses, to him it reveals its own body." The teaching of the Gita is soaked in the spirit and gospel of Grace. In the Vaishnavic tradition of Hinduism, Grace or Bhagawat Kripā is regarded as the sole agent of redemption and divine realisation. It is said to be ahaituki, actuated by no ostensible reason; and its action is irresistible and infallible. Ramanuja, Vallabhacharya, Chaitanya and Ramakrishna lay a preponderant stress on the divine Grace. Christianity can be called a religion of Grace, so much, in its essence, it hinges upon it." No man can come to Me unless the Father draw him" is remarkably identical in spirit with the Upanishadic saying quoted above. "Contemplation", says Ruys-

broeck, "places us in a purity and a radiance which is far above our understanding...and none can attain to it by knowledge, by subtlety, or by any exercise whatsoever, but *he whom God chooses* to unite to Himself, and to illuminate by Himself, he and no other can contemplate God." Here again we find almost a paraphrase of the Upanishadic saying. The same mystic says again elsewhere: "...the union takes place in God through grace and our homeward turning love..." Richard Rolle, another great Western mystic, confirms Ruysbroeck's words when he says : "Contemplative sweetness not without full great labour is gotten, and with joy untold it is possessed. Forsooth, it is not *man's merit but God's gift*..." Hilton, another mystic rings the same note : "...first He chooseth him, and that is when He draweth a man to Him by comfort of devotion..." In his "Scale Of Perfection", Hilton returns again and again to the subject of Grace and waxes inspiringly eloquent over it." The soul of a man, whilst it is not touched with special grace, is blunt and boisterous to ghostly[1] work, and can nought therein. It may not thereof for weakness of itself; it is both cold and dry, undevout and unsavoury in itself. But then cometh the light of grace, and through touching maketh it sharp and subtle, ready and able to ghostly work, and giveth it a great freedom and an whole readiness in will for to be buxom to all the stirrings of grace, ready for to work after that grace stirreth..." Baron Von Hugel calls Grace "the noblest root and flower of the Jewish-Christian religion and of European civilisation, the sense of givenness..." S.L. Frank, a famous Russian philosopher-mystic, clearly brings out the essential Christian attitude to Grace when he writes in his book, "God with us" : "All ethical religions except Christianity, are religions of Law...religions, that is, whose moral content is limited to definite moral rules and ways of living. In principle. i.e. leaving aside the question of human sinfulness, it is possible to realise consistently and to the end the conditions of life prescribed by the Jewish, the Mahomedan, the Confucian, and partly even by the Buddhist religion, for it is possible to carry out the rules of conduct enjoined by them. But it is impossible by human efforts alone to realise through definite forms of conduct and of social order the main Christian commandment to 'be perfect, even as the Father in heaven is perfect' or, in other words, to become wholly like God. Christianity is the religion of grace and not of law. Man can and must by the moral effort of will and the spiritual intensity of prayer

[1] Ghostly = Spiritual

draw the gracious forces to himself, but it does not depend upon him in what measure they will flow to him, nor what their effect may be....In revealing to man the ideal of absolute perfection for which he must strive, Christianity calls forth the whole of his spiritual energy. But it teaches him clearly to distinguish between two ways towards perfection.The first is the main Christian path of perfecting one's inner spiritual condition, of giving one's heart to God and striving for the divine likeness. In following that path man knows that his own powers are insufficient for attaining the end, and that the amount of grace bestowed upon him, being a free gift, depends upon God's will alone; it is inevitably a case of 'many being called, but few chosen'; there is however, no set limit either to man's spiritual energy, or to the flow of grace." "According to Origen, freedom and grace are the two wings on which the human soul ascends to God."

We have assured ourselves of the traditional background of an almost universal faith in Grace among spiritual seekers. Let us now turn to the teachings of the Mother and try to understand what she says on the subject.

What is Grace?

Going to the very root of the matter, the Mother explains the genesis of Grace and its essential nature; and then she throws light upon the nature of its action, the conditions to be fulfilled for receiving it, its place in the Integral Yoga etc. According to her, Grace is the Divine's Love which has descended here into the world of inconscience and ignorance to raise it towards the supreme Truth and its infinite Light of Consciousness. "The Supreme has sent His Grace into the world to save it."[1] Before its advent, everything here was dark and dense and inert, in the death-grip of inanimate Matter. Love came down as Grace, and gave the first, perennial impetus to evolution. It awoke the Spirit that slept in Matter, and, little by little, leads it back to its own infinite and eternal superconscience. Grace is all-permeating, all-sustaining and all-transfiguring. It is everywhere, and supremely dynamic behind the tangled play of the apparent and occult world-forces.

"What you have to do is to give yourself up to the Grace of the Divine; for, it is under the form of Grace, of Love, that it has consented to uplift

[1] *Words of the Mother*

the universe after the first involution was established...With the Divine Love is the supreme power of Transformation. It has this power because it is for the sake of Transformation that it has given itself to the world and manifested everywhere. Not only has it infused itself into man, but also into all the atoms of the most obscure Matter in order to bring the world back to the original Truth. It is this descent that is called the supreme sacrifice in the Indian scriptures."[1]

Grace, then, is Love pervading the whole universe and acting from behind a thick veil as the most potent force of redemption and transformation. The popular idea that Grace is something that comes all of a sudden one knows not from where, achieves a miraculous result, and retires to where it came from, is based on a partial truth; for it takes account of the sporadic outward result of the working of Grace, but not of its constant, active Presence in all that exists in the universe. Grace is present in all beings, things and happenings as an all-knowing and all-directing Love; and it is enough to open to it with faith and trust in order to benefit by its mighty action. "The Grace is equally for all. But each one receives it according to his sincerity. It does not depend on outward circumstances but on a sincere aspiration and openness."[2]

Those who walk through life with their eyes unblinded by any materialist bias, their inner perception not quite blurred by personal preferences, and their hearts meekly receptive to spiritual influences, may perceive something of the mysterious working of Grace. But those who follow the spiritual life, particularly the life of Yoga, can never fail to testify to the fact that from "behind the appearances...this infinite, wonderful, all-powerful Grace...knows everything, organises everything, arranges everything, and leads us, whether we want it or not, whether we know it or not, towards the supreme goal, the union with the Divine, the awareness of the Divine Consciousness and becoming one with it."[3] How it makes us keep to the line of advance in spite of ourselves! And how, when we stray and wander, when our inner vision is dimmed and the heart's fire flags, it keeps pointing us to the distant Light and whispering in our ears : "*Aham twām sarvapapevyah mokshayishyāmi mā shuchah*" (I will deliver thee from all

[1] *Words of the Mother*—3rd Series
[2] *Words of the Mother*—3rd Series
[3] *Advent*, April 1957

sin, do not grieve). When harried by some heady desire, or blinded by some passion or delusion, we revolt against the Will of the Divine, Grace smites us with disgrace and calamity, and makes us smart with sharp pain, so that the desire or delusion may be burnt out in the fire of suffering, and we may turn again towards the outstretched arms of the Divine. If the pressure of Grace upon the crooked and the cowering parts of our being is sometimes heavy and painful, it is only to straighten them out and make them strong enough to bear the Divine's yoke;[1] for the yoke of the Divine upon the parts of our instrumental nature is the release of our soul into His unconditioned freedom.

Our valuation of things is superficial and ignorant. What we regard as good or bad, auspicious or inauspicious, happy or unhappy, helpful or harmful is all grist to the mill of benign Providence, which uses them indifferently for the ultimate good of every evolutionary soul. It uses misfortune with as much clairvoyant grace as good fortune. It makes no bones of employing even disaster and death, if need be, to wrest a soul from the toils of ignorance. Once our eyes are fully opened to the truth of the constant presence and intervention of divine Grace, we learn not to complain of the circumstances of our lives, but see in them all the hand of the All-Lover who is leading us infallibly to Himself, to His eternal harmony and happiness, which is the ultimate fulfilment of our destiny.

"If you are truly in a state of intense aspiration", says the Mother, "there is no circumstance that will not serve to help you in the realisation of your aspiration. All will come to help you, as if it were the perfect and absolute Consciousness that organised all things around you. And you in your external ignorance may not recognise it, may at first protest against the circumstances as they come to you, may complain and try even to change them. But after a time you will have become wiser, with a little distance put in between you and the event, you will find out that that was just the thing necessary for you to make the required progress. It is a Will, a supreme Good Will that arranges everything around you."[2] It is an all-seeing universal Love that orders and directs our life, and not a blind chance or an inscrutable conspiracy of accidents.

In our spiritual life it is not unoften that we observe with a growing wonder and gratitude how experiences come into us, how veil after veil

[1] "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me."—Christ.
[2] *Advent*, Feb. 1957

is lifted from our consciousness, truth after truth is revealed to our vision, and frozen masses of darkness are dispelled in a trice, as if by a miracle! What we could not achieve by intense personal efforts, by discipline and prayer, comes suddenly sailing into us as a mere gift. We know not how a certain luminous hint is thrown in, a certain necessary poise is established, a new solution is suggested for an obstinate problem, a besetting obstacle is cast out of our way, and the bewitching, beckoning glory of a new horizon is disclosed to our view ! When we feel lost and forlorn, and do not know how to proceed, a ray of light is shot into our being and a nameless force carries us out of the wood. There can be no moment, no circumstance, no happening in which we need feel depressed or despair. Thanks to Grace, "each beat of the wing of sorrow can be a soar towards glory."[1] There is an eye that is sleepless in its loving vigil, and a hand that is tireless in rendering help and healing. To feel lost is to deny God and repel His Grace.

> "Who is worthy or unworthy in front of the Divine Grace ?
> All are children of the same Mother.
> Her love is equally spread over all of them.
> But to each one She gives according to his nature and receptivity."[2]

Conditions of Grace

"But there are conditions to fulfil : a great purity must be there and a great intensity in the self-giving, and that absolute trust in the supreme Wisdom of the Divine Grace which knows better than us what is truly good for ourselves. If the aspiration is offered to That and the offering is made truly and with enough intensity, the result will be marvellous."[3]

Purity, unstinted self-giving and implicit faith and trust are the three main conditions for an unimpeded working of the divine Grace. Not to have faith is to keep the doors of one's being shut against Grace. "The Grace is always there ready to act but you must let it work and not resist its action. The one condition required is faith."[4] Not to give oneself is

[1] *The Supreme Discovery* by the Mother.
[2] *Words of the Mother*
[3] *Advent*, Feb. 1957
[4] *Words of the Mother*—4th Series

to remain helplessly imprisoned in egoistic and separative ignorance. Faith and self-giving make for purity, and purity ensures a smooth working of Grace. "Let us give ourselves without reserve to the Divine so best shall we receive the Divine Grace."[1]

Grace and Universal Justice

"Justice is the strict logical determinism of the movements of universal Nature."[2] An inexorable law of causality, an inflexible system of cause and consequence governs the operations of all universal forces. There is in it no exceptions, no loop-holes, as the Buddha declared. As one sows so one has to reap. There is no escape from the natural and inevitable consequences of one's karma. But "the divine Force alone", as the Mother assures us, "has the power to intervene and change the course of Universal Justice."[3] Grace possesses this freedom to override the determinism of universal nature, because it is from beyond the circle of nature that it acts —its sovereignty lies in its all-comprehending transcendence. Its freedom is not the licence of an arbitrary caprice, but the sovereign liberty of the all-knowing Wisdom of Love of which universal Justice itself is a derivative, mechanical action in temporal manifestation. The following example, once given by the Mother, may illustrate the action of Grace : Suppose that a man is going down a staircase a loose, dislodged tile of whose roof is on the point of falling right upon his head. According to the law of gravitation, the tile would fall and break his head, but lo, suddenly a hand stretches forth from behind and catches the tile. The man is saved. This interception by a person from behind him is an intervention of Grace, which nullifies the rigid determinism of Nature". It is the great work of the Avataras", says the Mother, "to manifest the Divine Grace upon earth, To be a disciple of the Avatara is to become an instrument of the Divine Grace. The Mother is the great dispensatrix—through identity—of the absolute mechanism of Universal Justice. And through her mediation each movement of sincere and confident aspiration towards the Divine calls down in response the intervention of the Grace."[4]

[1] *Words of the Mother*
[2] Ibid
[3] Ibid
[4] ibid

"Without the ceaseless intervention of Thy Grace, who would not oftentimes have come under the merciless blade of the Law of Universal Justice?"[1]

"It is the Divine Grace that must be prayed for—if justice were to manifest, very few would be those who could stand in front of It."[2]

The Right Attitude

Once we have given ourselves over to Grace, we must abide by whatever it decides, and try to perceive its will in all that happens to us, good or bad, favourable or unfavourable, whatever it is, according to our mental standards. "The same thing, the same circumstance, identically the same, if taken as a gift from God, as a Divine Grace, as the effect of a total harmony, helps us to become more conscious, more strong and more true."[3] This is the right attitude. If we keep it, we profit by all that befalls us, because our faith and trust in Grace makes it easy for it to act freely in and upon us, and by its mysterious alchemy turn defeat into victory and misfortune into a supreme good fortune. This is a universal experience of spiritual seekers all the world over.[4] But, on the other hand, if the same thing, the same circumstance is taken as "a blow given by Fate, as a bad force that seeks to hurt us", it will serve only "to diminish us, make us dull and heavy; it will take away our consciousners, our force and the harmony."[5] The classical example of Prahlad is an apt case in point. Because his dependence on Grace was absolute, Grace carried him unscathed through all ordeals. Doubt or misgiving is an obstacle put in the way of the action of Grace. A simple, unquestioning faith and confidence is the best safeguard against all difficulties. "The Grace and help are always there for all who aspire for them, and their power is limitless when received with faith and confidence."[6] If the response of Grace does not come immediately, one should wait with confident patience—infinite patience, if need be,—without allowing the mind to entertain the least doubt or the vital to lose its quiet. "With

[1] *Words of the Mother*

[2] *Words of the Mother*—4th Series

[3] *Advent*, Feb. 1957.

[4] If the ordeal and fault have flung you down, if you have sunk into an abyss of suffering, do not at all be grieved, for it is there that the divine affection, the supreme benediction will reach you!"—*The Supreme Discovery* by the Mother.

[5] *Advent*, Feb. 1957

[6] *Words of the Mother*

patience and perseverance all prayers are fulfilled."[1] "Continue to have full faith in the Divine's Grace, Will and Action and all will be all right."[2] Even a moment's slip from this right attitude may deflect or retard the action of Grace.

Grace and Illness

The Mother says that "90 p.c. of illnesses are the result of the subconscient fear in the body. In the ordinary consciousness of the body there is a more or less hidden anxiety about the consequences of the slightest physical disturbance. It can be translated by these words of doubt about the future : 'And what will happen ?' It is this anxiety that must be checked. Indeed, this anxiety is a lack of confidence in the Divine Grace, the unmistakable sign that the consecration is not complete and perfect."

As a remedial measure against this kind of pernicious anxiety, the Mother suggests the following method: "As a practical means of overcoming ths subconscient fear, each time that something of it comes at the surface, the more enlightened part of the being must impress on the body the necessity of an entire trust in the Divine's Grace, the certitude that the Grace is always working for the best in ourself as well as in all, and the determination to submit entirely and unreservedly to the Divine's Will."[3] A complete and unwavering trust in Grace is the most effective antidote against all fear.

Grace and the Integral Yoga

It can be said that as the Mother regards Grace to be the sole motive power behind the evolutionary ascent of man in general, so too she considers it to be the only means of progress in the Integral Yoga. According to Sri Aurobindo, "the principal thing in the Yoga is to trust in the Divine Grace at every step, to direct the thought continually to the Divine and to offer oneself till the being opens and the Mother's force can be felt working in the Adhara."[4] Nobody, however powerful[5] he may be, can

[1] *Words of the Mother*
[2] ibid
[3] ibid
[4] *The Bases of the Yoga* by Sri Aurobindo.
[5] "However long the journey may be and however great the traveller, at the end is always found exclusive reliance on the Divine Grace."—*The Words of the Mother.*

do the Integral Yoga and reach its great goal of supramental transformation by his own strength and effort. It is a complete reliance on the divine Grace from the very beginning of the Yoga to the end that is indispensable —in the beginning for kindling the flame of aspiration and directing and fortifying our intense endeavour for self-offering, and in the end for the conquest of the supreme Truth and its manifestation in material life. "Let us offer our will to the Divine Grace, it is the Grace that accomplishes all."[1] The Integral Yoga, as it proceeds, cleaves through many a rocky tract and virgin forest. There are temptations below and temptations above—temptations in the domains of darkness to which we are so very prone, and temptations, almost irresistible temptations, in the regions of light. No human soul can overcome them by its unaided strength. "We must learn to rely only on the Divine Grace and to call for its help in all circumstances; then it will work out miracles."[2]

The bedrock truth secrectly sustaining and fortifying our faith in Grace is that the Divine is infinitely more solicitous about our liberation and perfection that we can ever be, for it is He who is evolving in us here,—our soul is His soul, our mind is His mind, our life is His life, and our body nothing but His material vesture. There is an inscrutable but unfailing Wisdom with its own impeccable rhythm behind His progressive self-revelation in every creature and thing. That Wisdom is the all-achieving Force of Love, and that is Grace. When once we realise this truth,[3] we cannot but fling ourselves headlong into the arms of Grace and let it carry us wherever and howsoever it chooses. Grace, then, becomes at once the sole pilot and refuge of our entire existence. Cradled on its illimitable bosom, we journey through storm and sunshine towards God's everlasting day of Love and Bliss, an ineffable joy and gratitude overflowing our hearts. A serene and joyous gratitude is the most helpful response our hearts can give to the action of Grace. "If one can be full of gratefulness and gratitude for the Divine Grace, then that is the last thing ; you begin to see that at every step things are exactly what they should be and the very best that can be. It is then that Sachchidananda begins to gather Himself and refashion His Unity."[4]

RISHABHCHAND

[1] *Words of the Mother*
[2] ibid
[3] It is a spontaneous Knowledge in our soul.
[4] *Advent*, Feb. 1957

SRI AUROBINDO AND THE PROBLEM OF WORLD PEACE

I AM afraid, the subject which I have selected may appear to a logical positivist as a nonsensical one. 'Peace' like 'soul' can hardly be given a meaning in logical positivism with reference to anything observable. The problem of world peace may not, therefore, appear to be a real philosophical problem to which a real answer can be given. 'Peace' can only be referred to certain emotions, which are associated with the word and which it arouses in us. But emotions, the logical positivists will say, are immaterial, are not matters of fact and only matters of fact can be known, according to them.

Before we come to the subject proper, let us clarify our mind a little about this strange position of the logical positivists who want philosophy to give up the old philosophical problems like God, self, bliss, freedom, immortality, peace etc. because they are meaningless and unanswerable. It is true that these problems involve elements which express feeling and which are not matters of fact in the sense in which the logical positivists consider a fact as fact. But does it follow that philosophy must, therefore, throw overboard all these old questions—which after all we cannot help asking—and confine itself to logic and the Analysis of Language ? But why should philosophy not change its method to suit its problems, instead of changing its problems to suit its method ?

Then again why should we rely more upon the judgment of our senses and our mind than that of our heart ? When people say that only matters of fact can be known, they probably presume that only thoughts can be rational. They think that our feelings and emotions are irrational and tell us nothing about the world but only express our reactions to it. But we all know that our thoughts are sometimes irrational and if our thoughts can be sometimes irrational, why should not our feelings sometimes be rational ? If ideas in our minds can tell us something about the structure of the world when they are properly thought, why should not our feelings, when they are properly felt, do the same ? After all, the sciences which work by purely intellectual methods are not the only expressions of human

rationality, nor the sole repositories of human discovery and human wisdom. Art in all its forms, specially in poetry, and religion in all its varieties contain rich resources of vision, insight and illumination, gathered up through centuries of human experience and human reflection. What they have to teach us—and it is much, and more essential to us than anything that science can offer—comes primarily, if not exclusively, from emotional experience, clarified and purged from subjectivity and self-centredness by its own emotional discipline. True, philosophy cannot accept this, any more than it can accept science, uncritically. But to disregard it altogether on the ground that it is mixed with emotion would seem to be evidence of emotional bias rather than of intellectual acuteness or integrity. If, therefore, you dismiss the problems of self, perfection, immortality, freedom, peace, happiness etc. as unphilosophical problems you not only deliberately try to shut out some of the vital problems of the human mind and human life but also betray an intellectual narrowness and emotional prejudice.

But, as I said before, whether the logical positivists want them or not, these questions continually crop up and we cannot help asking them. The recent revolutions in modern science itself are of such a revealing nature that the logical distinctions between matters of fact and matters of feeling are fast disappearing, the long-standing intellectual antagonism between matter and spirit is losing its force and we are being more and more persuaded to develop an integrated and balanced outlook upon human nature and human life, upon human knowledge itself.

Indeed, we may do well by reminding ourselves once again that long, long ago Plato defined philosophy as "Synoptic vision" inasmuch as it is a comprehensive outlook on life. And in order that we should be able to develop a comprehensive outlook on life and exercise a "synoptic vision" on reality, it is essential that we should be able and ready to use all possible sources and resources of knowledge and not draw a line arbitrarily at some particular point of enquiry and categorically refuse to go beyond it or to consider the problems, however apparently insoluble or even unanswerable, which lie outside the scope of enquiry arbitrarily drawn by us. True, such artificial limitations do serve some useful purpose and we must value them as such. But to confine ourselves within these limitations in the belief that such limitations keep us within the easy reach of mentally cognitive knowledge is to unduly and severely restrict the free and unfettered scope of philosophical knowledge. Philosophy need

not be a mere handmaid of science even in this predominantly scientific age of ours. From the beginning it has had its own independent life and growth and its own objectives and method. The only thing which we may insist upon here as elsewhere is that it should be continually dynamic and more and more comprehensive and all-embracing in its method and scope of enquiry.

Today, therefore, the philosophical position of Sri Aurobindo has this distinctive significance that at a time when philosophy is increasingly sought to be turned into a close follower and collaborator of science and the pre-occupation of a heavily intellectual or rationalising mind, he restores to it the Platonic quality and power of 'synoptic vision' by enriching and exalting it to the plane of a complex and dynamic integralism. "The philosophy of integralism" as Dr. Haridas Choudhury tells us, 'aims at a connected view of the nature of the universe on the basis of an integration of all the cognitive resources of human personality. Most of the so-called philosophical systems in the west are the outcome of the rational interpretation of the nature of existence chiefly in terms of a particular province of human experience. For instance, materialism is usually the philosophical outlook of a physicist or natural scientist, whereas spiritualism is a religious man's philosophy of life. Vitalism is usually the philosophy of a biologist turned philosopher, whereas a moralist usually discovers his philosophy either in ethical idealism or in idealistic evolutionism. Pragmatism is usually the philosophy of a man of action, whereas absolute idealism is the *Weltanschaung* of a speculative thinker of retiring disposition". Sri Aurobindo, on the contrary, stresses the fact that a sound and adequate philosophy should be based upon an integrated vision of the nature of existence. "Such an integrated vision can be attained not through mere critical reflection upon the plurality of fragmentary human experiences, such as common sense, art, science, morality, religion and the like, but by outgrowing all partial experiences through a total mobilization of the different resources of human personality....

...An integral vision of reality implies two things : first, immediate contact with the inmost nature of existence in its manifold richness of content ; secondly, an integration of such different provinces of experience as common sense, science, art, morality, and the like, in the light of one's immediate insight into the heart of reality. The common name for this immediate insight or direct contact with ultimate reality is spiritual intuition. Spiritual intuition or mystic realisation may, however, often be

carried to such an extreme that the world of plurality seems to it an unreal appearance, void of intrinsic significance. But, according to Sri Aurobindo, the fullness of spiritual realization brings about a reaffirmation of the world of plurality on a deeper foundation, a re-integration of the different provinces of human experience in a comprehensive truth-vision. It is vital to the understanding of the philosophy of integralism to realise that a harmonisation of the totality of human experience is not possible through mere criticism of the categories of common sense and science, or through mere logico-empirical analysis of the different types of human judgment, or through logical articulation of one sided mystic experience. Such harmonization can adequately be achieved only on the basis of an inner growth of consciousness brought about by complete integration of personality."

Such being the objective and method of Sri Aurobindo's philosophy of integralism, it is not surprising if he brings to bear an integral outlook of comprehensive as well as complex harmony upon nearly every question which concerns us and our life. We may profitably recall here his famous observation on the problems of existence as a whole as expressed by him in the very opening chapter of *The Life Divine*. "All problems of existence", he says, "are essentially problems of harmony. They arise from the perception of an unsolved discord and the instinct of an undiscovered agreement or unity. To rest content with an unsolved discord is possible for the practical and more animal part of man, but impossible for his fully awakened mind, and usually even his practical parts only escape from the general necessity either by shutting out the problem or by accepting a rough, utilitarian and unillumined compromise. For essentially, all Nature seeks a harmony, life and matter in their own sphere as much as mind in the arrangement of its perceptions. The greater the apparent disorder of the materials offered or the apparent disparateness, even to irreconcilable opposition, of the elements that have to be utilized, the stronger is the spur, and it drives towards a more subtle and puissant order than can normally be the result of a less difficult endeavour. The accordance of active Life with a material of form in which the condition of activity itself seems to be inertia, is one problem of opposites that Nature has solved and seeks always to solve better with greater complexities; for its perfect solution would be the material immortality of a fully organised mind-supporting animal body. The accordance of conscious mind and conscious will with a form and a life in themselves not overtly self-conscious and

capable at best of a mechanical or sub-conscious will is another problem of opposites in which she has produced astonishing results and aims always at higher marvels; for there her ultimate miracle would be an animal consciousness no longer seeking but possessed of Truth and Light, with the practical omnipotence which would result from the possession of a direct and perfected knowledge. Not only, then, is the upward impulse of man towards the accordance of yet higher opposites rational in itself, but it is the only logical completion of a rule and an effort that seem to be a fundamental method of Nature and the very sense of her universal strivings."

The problem of world peace which we propose to examine here is, therefore, also essentially a problem of harmony. Here, too, we are face to face with a situation of an apparently "irreconcilable opposition" which is, nevertheless, changing fast, as centuries roll by, into one of surer and subtler and more complex harmony than is perceptible to our limited external senses or intelligence. The two broad irreconcilable facts which we are to reckon with here are that "there has been almost continuous war in the world and man has ever been a quarrelling and fighting animal". The other fact which is no less true is that the unity of mankind being evidently "a part of Nature's eventual scheme", man has been seeking peace and harmony for himself from the very first. It may be that he has been so far seeking peace in his personal individual life more than in his collective life. But it is now increasingly becoming a fact that as his enlightenment increases and the knowledge of himself as a part of a vast integral or at least mutually dependent collectivity dawns upon him in clearer and stronger light, his efforts towards the realization of effective peace in his collective, international life are no less intensifying and strengthening. It is interesting to recall here the observation of our Prime Minister Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru during his recent nationwide television and radio speech from U.S.A. in which he said that "the danger of war is not past and the future may hold fresh trials and tribulations of humanity. Yet the forces of peace are strong and the mind of humanity is awake." Mr. Nehru's observation, however, is mostly the product of a natural sense of realism and an instinctive faith in the destiny and constructive effort of man.

Also, we notice that it is with something of the defensive urgency of the terrible times we live in that the move to recall and revive Buddhism not only in our own country but others has taken on such a quick momen-

tum and a large international significance in recent years. It is evident that not only the spirit of man today feels greatly alarmed at the prospect of a nuclear war such as seems to threaten us at present but the age-old method of warfare itself for the solution of our political and economic problems is becoming a very costly, debilitating and profitless one. We have now begun to feel the urgent necessity of pinning our faith in the method of peace, negotiation, mutual adjustment and co-opeartion in order to solve our national and international problems, and that's why the Buddha's gospel of non-violence, peace, brotherhood, and tolerance evokes today such a ready and strong response in our hearts and minds.

While these are, no doubt, some of the healthy signs pointing to a definite turn in the consciousness and instinctive life of the modern man, what we have to recognise, no less, is that it is high time, the problem of world peace were made not only a thing of emotional and ethical value but one of sober intellectual analysis and psychological evaluation. Such a sobriety and objectivity of approach to the apparently emotional nature of the problem of peace is called for not only because our conscious mind today has become more and more scientific and rational in its attitudes, as well as operations but also because most of the attempts previously made for the solution of this problem were chiefly done by a too idealising, even impatient mentality or the ethical and religious being of man. This does not, however, mean that ambitious and zealous military warriors or administrators or statesmen did not attempt it before. History bears testimony to a number of such practical, political and military efforts and enterprises. But the fundamental thing which stares us in the face, if we scrutinize these historical attempts critically, is that these secular attempts by worldly minded talents were mostly designed for the creation of some large and workable association of mankind rather than for that thing which we call 'peace' and 'harmony'.

This naturally calls for a clear cut distinction between the terms 'peace' and 'association'. There may be and is a world of difference between a life of true co-operation and harmonious peace and that of an exiguous political or administrative or military unity. The fact is that we may temporarily succeed in establishing the political unity of mankind without bringing about an effective and real peace. Our urgent and paramoun problem is the creation of peace and not merely administrative or political unity and economic equality in the world.

It is here that the words of sober, objective historical knowledge as

well as deep spiritual wisdom of Sri Aurobindo are of immense value to us. His two books namely *The Human Cycle* and *The Ideal of Human Unity* are as important for us, for the solution of our urgent international problems as *The Life Divine* is for the philosophical enlightenment and knowledge of the continuous course of the long evolution of human life and its inevitable ultimate destiny. It is the wide-awake, integrally-visioned philosophical seer that clearly and firmly outlines for us the past, present and future of man. In *The Ideal of Human Unity* and *The Human Cycle*, it is the same seer but now additionally endowed with a comprehensive knowledge of and insight into the sober facts and events of history through the ages, that once again outlines for us the ultimate destiny of man and the eventual scheme of things which Nature has been secretly and ceaselessly working out for him.

(to be continued)

SREEKRISHNA PRASAD

THE LIFE DIVINE

(An outline)

Chapter XIV

The Origin of Falsehood and Evil

IN this view of Ignorance as a self-limiting knowledge how is the problem of evil explained ? A restricted instrumental working in the world-order is intelligible, but what is the necessity of falsehood and evil ? Yet these phenomena, since all that is is the Absolute, must have a purpose and significance.

Let us examine the problem from these points of view : first in relation to the Absolute; second its origin in the cosmic working ; and third its action in the individual being. It is clear that falsehood and evil are creations of the Ignorance and Inconscience and not native to the Transcendence or infinite power of Cosmic Spirit. It does not follow that because Truth and Good have their absolutes, so Falsehood and Evil must also have their absolutes; nor do these apparent opposites—Knowledge and Ignorance, Truth and Falsehood, Good and Evil—only belong to the dualities. If Ignorance disappears into Knowledge, evil and falsehood can no longer endure, since these latter are the direct results of wrong consciousness. They are in fact a by-product of the world-movement rooted in the Inconscient. On the other hand Truth and Good are absolute principles, in which error and evil have no permanent place.

We see Truth as relative because we do not see the complete truth, but only partial constructions. Because of our indirect contact with reality other truths are shut out, so that in what we see there are errors. A mental construction cannot be the Truth. The first approach to Truth is through direct action of consciousness. This identical experience of things is the true nature of knowledge. Ignorance exists by a limitation of knowledge; error by a deviation from truth; and falsehood by a contradiction and denial. Knowledge is free of these limitations.

Human values of good and evil are relative and not true. Due to our mixture of knowledge and ignorance what we call evil may result in good, and what we call good may result in evil. Even pain and suffering are the result of a wrong consciousness, or an insufficient consciousness-force in our surface being. Falsehood and evil are then circumstantial contradictions of truth and good, and not absolute.

The very fact of truth or good being manifest makes their negation conceivable, as in other contrary aspects of the Divine Existence. These negations are not, however, absolutes, even in cosmic existence. They arise through the breaking up of the unity of the original timeless being into separative consciousness and being; for error is impossible where there is oneness. So also falsehood and evil cannot exist where there is a total truth and total consciousness. But even in separate beings harmony and truth can prevail over evil; falsehood and evil are not inevitable but rather circumstantial due to wrong consciousness. We have to see whether falsehood, error and evil belong only to the material manifestation, or exist also in the supraphysical or universal Mind and Life.

Traditional knowledge states that even when we go beyond the material plane we experience powers and forces of vital mind and life which seem to be original forces of evil and perversity. These perverse forces enter into the life of terrestrial beings; they have stood opposed to the soul's progress towards light, truth and good, and a divine consciousness. These have been figured in myth and religion as a constant conflict between the Powers of Light and Darkness.

This traditional knowledge is verifiable by an inner experience; for there is an original cosmic Force with many cosmic forces dependent on it. Some are forces of Light supporting the Knowledge, while others are Forces of Darkness, Evil and Falsehood supporting the Ignorance and Inconscience. These dark forces have been symbolised in the past as seeking to possess the world and govern the life of man; opposed to the Light, Truth and Good that man is seeking. Science, however does not believe in these invisible forces. Yet if invisible cosmic physical forces exist, there is no reason why there should not be invisible cosmic mental and vital forces. It is possible that Mind and Life on their own planes can form conscious beings which can act on beings in the physical Nature. The first source of good and evil would then be in the supraphysical Life, and not the terrestrial.

Inner experience shows that man is moved by forces not under his

control unless he steps back into the subliminal consciousness where he can deal with their action. He begins to realise then, that he is an embodied soul through whom Nature is seeking to fulfil itself, and that he is the centre of a struggle between the darkness of Ignorance and the light of Knowledge. Thus he encounters the forces of good and evil that belong to the planes of Life and Mind.

Firstly we note that these Forces are of a larger action,—superhuman, divine, or demoniac. They may possess part or the whole of man's nature. It is the magnitude of some of these Forces that makes evil appear to be absolute, as good is. But that which is immeasurable to man is not a sign of absoluteness. In spiritual experience we attain a freedom from pain and evil; for these powers can only reach an immensity and not an infinity. Thus error, falsehood and evil are cosmic powers; but relative.

These supraphysical powers may, however, be thought to be original cosmic principles. Yet we see that they belong only to the lower supraphysical life planes, created as an involutionary support for the evolutionary terrestrial formations. We can understand their origin best by noting the part they play in the return of Inconscience towards Consciousness.

Matter is the first emergence from the Inconscient, and it seems that here falsehood and evil cannot exist; for the Energy maintains the material form by a secret, mute and inner consciousness within it. There can thus be no conscious contact by which it can be influenced by good or evil, except that it may be regarded as an influence of good or evil through the reactions of conscious beings. Thus fire may be an aid or a destructive agent. The world of pure Matter is in fact neutral, and good and evil are not native to this material principle.

The duality of good and evil emerges with conscious life, the development of mind in life. Evil in fact is created in the individual through the vital mind, and the sense of moral evil only appears in man, not in the animal life. Pain and suffering are there in the animal, but without the mental responses of the human being. This does not mean that man must be indifferent to his mental responses in order to return to the natural law of neutrality to this duality. The animal expresses the infrarational truth of life and Matter. There is also both a rational and a suprarational truth. The former is the detached reason that looks on this natural law as a process of life and matter accepting everything impartially. Such is the philosophic and scientific reason. The suprarational truth springs from spiritual experience, and accepts the natural law as a consequence of the

world of ignorance, or sees all with calm as part of the divine working. It seeks a higher consciousness and knowledge where evil can be transcended. But we have also to see the value of good and evil, and their necessity.

Although good and evil are first recognised in individual experience through the reactions of the vital mind and ego, in the collective life of humanity they appear as helpful or unhelpful factors in the social development. Later the thinking mind develops an ethical system, or perhaps a law of Karma, to evaluate good and evil. Religion brings her own law. But behind this ethical instinct is the feeling that there is a deeper abiding truth, which is perceived on the spiritual and psychic level, through the soul's direct discernment.

One use of sin and evil can be seen in that it awakens the individual to the nature of the world ignorance, and the relative nature of good and happiness; and hence a turn towards an absolute. Or the nature may be purified by the pursuit of good and the negation of evil. Such awakening is a necessity for the evolution of the higher consciousness, which depends on the emergence of the soul-personality. For the soul naturally turns towards Truth, Good and Beauty. Although the psychic entity has the delight of all experiences it has to gather out of all its contacts in life the divine essence and purpose of things, for the evolution of the mental individual out of the Ignorance. The whole growth of the soul is in fact a progressive growth out of darkness into light. The soul alone, and not the mind, can see what is beyond good and evil, according to a supreme Truth. There it finds also a supreme and universal Good.

We have to see how evil and falsehood arise, and what is the remedy. In the development of our surface consciousness there are two factors : first an underlying consciousness and Power of inherent knowledge, and an over-lying layer of vital and physical consciousness enveloped in the inconscience of Matter. Second, the emergence of life-form against the pull of the material inertia. This results in the growth of a self-affirming vital and physical individual, with a concealed psychic behind. As mentality increases so a self-affirming ego develops. These two basic factors of the material and vital nature have developed the present character of the individual.

Consciousness at first appears to be completely alien to Matter; and yet it seems to act in a mechanical way as though it may be produced by Matter. But there is more than an automatic and mechanical action by consciousness, such as in the free play of intellect, imagination and speculation. Rather

we must see that there has been a concealed consciousness in things which is gradually emerging through the evolution. The emergence of animal life and mind confirm this view.

The animal, with a limited surface consciousness, is moved largely by an intuition in its life-operations. This intuition arises through the vital and physical need and becomes fixed as an automatic and hereditary instinct. This instinct is unfailing except when there is an interference from the surface consciousness or there are changed circumstances. There is also a second source of knowledge from the individual's contact with the outer world. This gives rise to sense-perception and later intelligence. But this perception is dependent on the inner contact with the subliminal being. Through the emergence of this subliminal consciousness a vital mind and then a thinking intelligence are formed.

The subliminal consciousness cannot come immediately to the surface because of the obstruction of the Inconscience, and also the evolution must develop slowly through an imperfect surface awareness. By this limitation the vital and mental operation is forced to develop organs and instincts for indirect knowledge. This creates an external knowledge, at first with a vague sensational perception, and later through a vital intelligence activated by desires and impulses. At first the activity is instinctive and automatic; with the mental subordinate to the vital sense. While the mind still serves the life instinct and desire, it develops its own special characters of observation and invention; and at the same time emotion brings in a finer sense to the lower vital reactions. Mind involved in life is largely based on instinct and vital intuition. It is on this that intelligence develops.

Although the animal basis remains—as intelligence grows—yet it is changed and uplifted. The innate intuition and instinct behind the animal nature is, however, made less effective in man by strong interference of the mind-intelligence. Mind brings in a greater capacity, but it is both of the consciousness-force and of error.

If, in the development of the individual, intuition had not been observed, then it would not have been possible for error to come in. This obscurity is due to the Inconscience through which mind and life have to express themselves. For Nature has chosen the slow and difficult evolution of Inconscience developing into Ignorance, and then into a partial knowledge preparing for the higher truth-knowledge. Mental intelligence is thus a transitory stage.

The evolutionary process works between a surface ignorance which

has to change into knowledge and a secret Consciousness-Force which has to manifest in the ignorance (or nescience). The surface nescience can change into knowledge because consciousness is there involved in it. This change is effected by contact with the world and its forces and objects which stir an inner consciousness. At first this underlying source of knowledge is obscure and imperfectly seized; but slowly a receptive awareness and understanding develop, evolving into a half-knowledge, half-ignorance. But there is yet a double source of error—an imperfect reception to the contact of things, and a deformation of the intuitive response from within.

Thus error is a necessary condition,—a stage in the evolution from nescience to knowledge. Here knowledge has to be acquired by indirect means,—a sign, image or physical vibration created by contact with the object results in a vital sensation which has to be interpreted by the sense-mind and turned into a mental idea. Things thus experienced have to be related together, and unknown things fitted into an already acquired experience. At each step judgment and interpretation are brought to bear on this experience in order to test, reject or confirm it. Observation is the first instrument of the mind, but is subject to the errors of the ignorant observing consciousness and sense-mind and personal reaction, as well as errors of judgment and interpretation.

Knowledge is built up through experience, memories and judgments, into a composite mental plan which is ever subject to modification and change. New knowledge is judged by past knowledge. Sometimes the existing standards cannot accommodate the new knowledge, which may be due to misapplication and misconstruction. In this mental process, however, there is a secret intuition at work, which corrects errors and tends towards a true interpretative knowledge. But this intuition is limited since it cannot act in its own right. Intelligence cannot discriminate between intuition of actuality and intuition of possibility. This results in a confusion of half formed, half erroneous mental constructions, which is the imperfect character of human knowledge.

Error is merely an imperfection of truth, resulting from the admission and trial of uncertain possibilities. It thus may open to fresh knowledge and the discovery of some truth. The obstructing inconscience is thus diminished, enabling the direct and intuitive knowledge to emerge.

Yet there is also a mental ego bent on its own self-affirmation and urged by the life-impulse. This is the ego-centric surface mentality which looks at the world from its own standpoint. This makes the search for

an impersonal truth almost impossible. Here preference, temperamental choice and prejudgment enter. It is by this gate that falsehood enters.

There are three main individual types : those governed by inertia (tamasic); those governed by passion and activity (rajasic); and those tending towards light, harmony and balance (sattwic). The tamasic intelligence belongs to the physical mind which follows a repetitive practicality and is obscure to the reception of new ideas. The rajasic intelligence belongs to the vital mind. It may be violent, assertive and aggressive, or it may be enthusiastic, insistent, impetuous, and restless. The sattwic intelligence is open to knowledge and is careful to consider and verify and adapt its view in order to build truth in a harmonious structure. Its light is limited, however, since it is centred on the mental ego. Although there is nearly always a mixture of these qualities, one of these usually predominates which restricts the individual to a certain type of experience. This creates the mental temperament and personality which is only open to partial truths.

In the field of will and action the same law applies as in cognition. A wrong consciousness gives a wrong dynamic reaction, even against the action instigated by the psychic entity. Instead it answers to the vital ego, which represents the affirmation of a separate life-being. This ignorant vital being becomes the principal source of disharmony and a main spring of wrong-doing and evil. For the vital element is concerned, not with truth but with self-affirmation, possession and satisfaction of desire. The life-self seeks to get from the mind a sanction for its own will, and a verdict of truth and good for its own impulses and desires. Thus the vital ego expands, seeking possession and control of things and beings. To gain these it may use violence, falsehood or aggression. This has been introduced in man's life, not only in the realm of ideas but also in religion, as well as in the domain of intellectual truth and the spirit. This self-asserting life brings with it hatred and dislike towards all that stands in the way, using cruelty and treachery, in order to satisfy this life-urge and affirmation.

This does not mean that evil is the very nature of the vital. It can have the passion for truth and good. It has the impulse of help and generosity and loyalty. The vital being and life-force are in fact Nature's chief means of effectuation without which neither mind nor body can realise the aim of their existence. But the inner or true vital being must replace the outer life-personality, so that the life-force can become the servant of the soul and the instrumentation for action of the spiritual being.

The source of error, we see, is a limited consciousness growing out of nescience. And a wrong consciousness governed by the life-ego is the source of evil. They are relative existences in the evolutionary ascent. The purpose of the life-ego is to form the individual and the consious being, growing out of the Inconscience. The ego itself is a temporary, though effective centre, a substitute for the true self in our surface experience. Secretly it is pushed towards a higher self. But in the ignorant consciousness it seeks to expand and to possess within the narrow limits of its own separate orbit.

Because the ego does not act by conscious interchange and unity, discord and disharmony arise, which create wrong and evil. These are necessary circumstances for the growth of the divided being supported by an ignorant consciousness. We have to see the evolutionary movement more broadly and from a wider standpoint to judge the relative values of good and evil. The sense of good and evil in man is itself a phase in his evolutionary progression.

Man progresses by selection and rejection, but in his present condition man's judgment and his standards are relative and even uncertain. A constant mixture of truth and half-truth pursues all his activities. A mental control of vital desires and instincts, without morality as a guide, are indispensable. But it is not the solution; man still remains a mixture of good and evil.

Selection of good and rejection of evil are a necessary phase in man's ascent; but the selective ideals of the human mind are relative and restricted. The call of the Infinite and the Supreme is the true goal of Nature, against which our narrow ideals must break or be severed from life. Religious idealism has attempted this latter, but the problem of life still remains. The practice of truth and virtue must be an approach to the spiritual realisation which itself brings the greater consciousness of the Infinite. A relative good is merely a training for the true, absolute Good, where the duality of truth and error no longer applies.

Man's awareness of good and evil, rooted in the Inconscience and emerging into the Ignorance where it now flourishes, must be faced by a greater consciousness and replaced by a higher knowledge. The only solution is a radical transformation of our nature. Wrong knowledge has resulted from the obscurity of the Inconscience and the divided consciousness of the Ignorance, and has given rise to error, falsehood and evil. A mental control or imposed strandard is not the cure. A total change of consciousness is the sole issue.

Because of our divided consciousness the process of healing must be through integration. The basis of this division is in the ego, especially the life-ego which upholds the law of egoistic self-affirmation. Through this self-affirmation errors and evil arise; first wrong consciousness, then wrong will, and then wrong action. We can know nothing of others so long as we do not know their inner consciousness and needs. Even when we pride ourselves on knowledge and selflessness it is through our ignorance and ego that we do so. Altruism is a potent instrument for self-enlargement but it does not transform the ego. Nor does mutilation of one's self help us to become one with all; it may help to magnify the collective ego. Even sacrifice and self-giving must be done with the right consciousness and will founded on a true knowledge. Developing the sattwic nature is the best we can do within the mental limits, but it is a stage and not the goal of our growth. These are provisional steps that give us temporary help, because the true solution is beyond our present capacity until we have evolved sufficiently to pursue it..

Through our spiritual growth we become one self with all beings; we attain the law of our self-affirmation for others, not at the expense of others. Religions have sought this universal compassion, but this is not possible while man is living in his ego. But even oneness with others is not enough by itself, if it is a oneness with their ignorance. It must be a oneness of soul and spirit which can only come through our own soul-awareness and self-knowledge. Our own self-realisation is the basis, and comes through our following the spiritual call.

In the spiritual knowledge there are three steps of self-realisation first to discover the true soul, or psychic entity, and make it the dominant element in our nature and the guide of all our actions; second to become aware of the eternal self in us that is one with the self of all beings, which gives us the universal realisation; and third to know the Divine Being who is at once our supreme Self, the Cosmic Being and our inner psychic being, the spark of the Divine within us. Through this awareness we become channels of the Divine Puissance (Shakti) and act according to her rule which is the deeper and subtler truth of things. Knowledge brings its dynamic consequence in our actions. Through our inner soul-reality we bridge our nature with the Divine Being who is above Nature.

The final division to be removed is the gulf between this evolutionary Nature and the Super-Nature, or Self-Power of the Divine. We can become aware of this Super-Nature or supreme Shakti working through us, even

in the ignorance. But it is a modification of her light and power. Eventually there is needed an entire remoulding of what we are into a power of the divine Super-Nature. The integration of our being must lead to the uplift of the whole mode of Nature itself. Possessed by the eternal Truth-Consciousness, all our awareness, will, feeling and movement will act through that Truth.

N. PEARSON

What is the use of only knowing? I say to thee, Act and be, for therefore God sent thee into this human body.

What is the use of only being? I say to thee, Become, for therefore wast thou established as a man in this world of matter.

SRI AUROBINDO

REVIEW

Vedarthasamgraha of Sri Ramanujacarya. Text and Translation *by S. S. Raghavachar M.A.* Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama Mysore. pp. 192. Rs. 3-50

Sri Ramanujacarya is well known as the greatest exponent of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedanta. He claimed to have derived this great system from some of the greatest thinkers who were definitely pre-Śankara and anti-māyāvāda. The direction given to him by Sri Yamunacarya who may well be called the founder of Visistadvaitic dialectics was to write a commentary on the Vedanta Sutras of Badarayana on the lines of the spiritual tradition of Nathamuni, Bodhayana, Tanka and Dramida assimilated with the Ālvars. Though the *Sri Bhaṣya* of Sri Ramanuja does not mention the Alvars as authorities yet it is well known that Sri Ramanuja as the Acarya of Vedanta and Prabandham directed his entire energies for the samanvaya or reconciliation both logically and spiritually and produced that unique product called the Ubhaya Vedanta. Whilst he himself did not write any work in Tamil yet he had a brilliant commentary written on the Tiruvaymozhi by one of his competent disciples and it is well known that it was written under his personal guidance. He also had another important work entrusted to him that of organizing the full mission of the Alvar-Rishis (Ubhaya-Vedanta) which he is said to have done by selecting 74 competent disciples for propagating the Viśiṣṭadvāita or Bhāgavata View of Life. It is not a little to the farseeing vision of Sri Ramanuja that the *bhakti-prapatti* cult had spread everywhere in India and had produced some of the most 'living' spiritual personalities. It is usually claimed that Sri Ramanuja set aside the fundamental view of buddhist and crypto-buddhist thinkers and rescued the spiritual view of life. Modern evaluations not-withstanding of the doctrines of buddhism and Mayavada there is a core of historical truth that the germs of disintegration of spiritual views are contained in them. This may be, the axiom of polarities of opposites, that the good when pursued just tends to produce evil by a process of automatic reversal, even as evil pursuing its career begins to produce good.

Be that as it may, it is clear that Sri Ramanuja wished to place Visistadvaita as a philosophy of spiritual experience and religion and as a consistent philosophy on a firm foundation. The age of scholasticism or mere textual interpretation of the Srutis too could lead to extraordinary innovations. Indeed it is well-known that there are any number of '*aspects*' or schools of Advaita, as Professor P. N. Srinivasacharya recently made out, which intellectually seek to present the basic philosophy of transcendence or Noumenalism. This of course is claimed to be 'a growth' in philosophy, but such growths are not integral presentations but intellectual innovations. Sri Ramanuja indeed was presented with so many interpretations of the basic texts of the Upanishads that it was absolutely necessary to bring about a coherent and consistent philosophy. As already pointed out Badarayana had given his recondite version in the form of the Sutras laying down his interpretation of the unity of the Upanishadic teaching. There were views indeed which went round claiming that the Upanishads as such gave no one teaching, that they gave a series of disciplines or vidyas and no coherency should be sought; indeed that some of them were more important than the others and set aside the others also. This finally boiled down to the selection of *mahavakyas*, sometimes torn out of the context so to speak, to give a view of realisation much nearer to one's desire rather than to the ultimate Reality. That personal predilections in regard to the Ultimate Reality may lead to a kind of sophism in Religious experience is not strange at all. All these had to be met and an objective account of the Basic Reality and Experience rather than a subjective and personal (or so-called impersonal ?) had to be given. Earlier reconciliations and criticisms of the religious sophisms known as *anubhava vadas* had been made by Bhaskara and Yadavaprakasa, but a radically new insight into the nature of Brahman or Ultimate Reality was the need, and it had to be put in the language of the Common man. This Sri Ramanuja did. As a preliminary to his great task of writing the Sri Bhasya or commentary on the Vedanta Sutras, he wrote the Vedartha Samgraha, which considers the basic Upanishadic passages and explains them from the standpoint of the Organic thesis already profoundly anticipated by Yajnavalkya in the Brihadaranyaka and in the Subala Upanishads. It will not do to hold that Yajnavalkya's statement of the Organic conception of relation between the Divine and the world and the souls is a solitary statement as Professor Hiriyanna affirmed. All that is necessary is to find out whether this 'solitary' insight is not capable of reconciling all the contradictory passages so to speak, which remain contra-

dictory and sublating one another, as long as this link of insight is not furnished. It is here that we find that the apparent pantheism attributed to Yajnavalkya is due to not properly evaluating a contribution of extraordinary fruitfulness. It is precisely this insight of Yajnavalkya that helped the Alvars on the one side and the great rishis on the other to see in their Yoga the possibility of concrete Experience at all levels. Just as the 'organic' *sarira-sariri-bhava* between the individual and the Divine on the one hand and the Divine and Nature on the other, had provided a dynamics of Yoga of Divine Realisation even here (in the temples and in the forests and in all states and stages of social and spiritual life), today we find the fruitfulness of Sri Aurobindo's Divine Evolutionism. It is perhaps not necessary to labour this point further. It is the dynamic fruitfulness of the concept or insight that makes for progress of philosophy and religious experience not mere dialectical jargons of the *navya-nyaya* or any other occidental 'logical' futilities issuing from however 'eminent' professorial sources. Again it is in the insight of the organic that the most important concept of unity of the Diverse or the simultaneity of the one and the many is apprehended. Indeed it is one of the merits of the Visistadvaita that it refused to consider the One-Many problem in the light of the relation between the universal and the particular apprehended as jati and vyakti. That leads us to see the essential weakness of the bhedabheda and Platonic idea-copy relationships which Sri Ramanuja in the East and Aristotle in the West have criticised. It is in the light of the organic evolution then we have to explain the Sri Aurobindonian solution of the One-Many and not as it was tried to be done with the help of Bhedabheda.

The name Vedarthasamgraha is perhaps not quite appropriate for a work that deals mainly with the Vedanta or Upanishadic thought (Vedantasamgraha). This view of the modern reader is excusable, though the ancient teachers considered that the Upanishads being the concluding and philosophic portion of the Vedic literature represents its summit or *Vedaśiras*. There are of course references to the Puruṣa-Sukta and other Vedic mantras to illustrate the philosophic bases of the Upanishadic teaching, and as a corrective to the 'independent' interpretations of the Upanishadic passages.

The *tattva*, the *hita* and the *purushartha* upheld by the Upanishadic teachers is fully brought out in this work. The introduction by Swami Adidevananda is a very clear and concise exposition of the several important points of the work. The text and translation by Sri Raghavachar follow each other so as to facilitate easy understanding. It is a matter for congratulation

that the translator has done his work conscientiously and faithfully. The translation reads well. Being philosophically trained he has avoided the usual pitfalls of those not so fitted by bringing out the force of the philosophical dialectics in the translation.

This is in one sense a work that could well be the basic text for study of the philosophy of Sri Ramanuja in some senses better than the *Sri Bhasya* for the beginner.

It is to be hoped that the volume on the analysis of the text and connected reflections promised by the translator in the Preface will be out soon.

K. C. VARADACHARI

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